

Fresh Facts from the Fishers

Most of Us Stayed

♪ **"Home for Christmas"** ♪

Family members travelled very little this winter. So there's no current family picture. Instead, we dug into the archives for this shot of Joy's and John's kids, taken several years ago.



Top to bottom: Stephen, Katrina, John-Marc, and Leana

China Re-Writing Scripture

Epoch Times reports that a Chinese textbook has changed the story of the woman caught in adultery. Their version has **Jesus stoning her to death and calling himself a sinner**. This is part of a wider trend of religious suppression by the Chinese Communist Party:

- They preside over a tightening crack-down on underground Christians and other religious groups, demolishing churches and detaining church members and leaders.
- According to *Bitter Winter*, an online magazine reporting on religious freedom issues in China, officials ordered a church to display the national flag at the entrance and to replace its church name with a banner that read "Follow the Party, thank the Party, and obey the Party."
- There is strict censorship of internet content, but shortwave broadcasts are difficult to block.

February 2021

A Nobel Surprise

The phone woke Jennifer Doudna at 3 A.M. A reporter asked her to comment on the Nobel Prize. Dr. Doudna asked, "Who won it?" The reporter said, "**You did!**" and was surprised the Nobel people hadn't already told her!

She and French microbiologist Emmanuelle Charpentier pioneered the technique they call "Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats." People call it CRISPR.

"Cut and Paste"

The DNA in our bodies is made up of bases A, C, G and T. As long as each is in its proper place, the body works fine. But some people have a defect. Doudna and Charpentier developed a technique to detect and correct this kind of problem, by removing a genetic error and putting the proper component in its place.

Most people won't need CRISPR therapy for their bodies. But all of us have a defect in our souls. Only God can reach inside us to cut out that defect, and to paste something good into its place.

God informs us in the Bible, "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." And he warns us, "The wages of sin is death."

There are moral defects in our characters. So every person deserves eternal death. How can we correct that problem?

We can't, but God can. He offers to "cut" the sin from our beings, and "paste" his goodness into its place.

He offers, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh." That's a "cut and paste" job that we all need. And only God can perform it!

News You May Have Missed

- American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) reports that 42% of all deaths last year worldwide were abortions.
- *Christianity Today* reports 3 of every 4 martyrdoms were in Nigeria.
- Viet Nam now has its first Christian library.
- Swaziland has changed its name to Eswatini.

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Beyond Words, Beyond Imagination

Imagine that you had lived 200 years ago. You try to explain television to an 1821 person. And cell phones. And Zoom.

And someone 200 years into the **future** tries tell us about innovations that he uses every day. He describes a “thing-a-mabob” in detail, but we don't understand.

Limited Words to Describe Unlimited Reality

Likewise, what can we know about heaven, within the limitations of earthly language? Well, the Bible says the streets are paved with gold, not asphalt. It also says:

“What no eye has seen,
What no ear has heard,
And what no human mind has conceived –
The things God has prepared for those who love him...”

When we see heaven in that light, we won't worry about maybe getting bored, with nothing to do but sit around playing harps. As we walk from the room we were in yesterday to a new one today, we expect to react with surprise and delight day after day. We understand what the Queen of Sheba meant when she exclaimed, “The half could not be fancied.”



Targets for Praise & Prayer

- **Suicides in Japan increased 16% July to October compared to the same period in 2019.**
- **Please pray that God will enable us to continue Japanese for as long as is His perfect will.**
- **For wisdom in choosing topics, and developing them in ways that make sense to people who have never seen a Bible.**
- **That God will continue to use the program.**
- **That medication will keep Dave's health issues under control.**
- **That we continue to avoid COVID and other health issues.**
- **That all of our grandchildren and “greats” will be sure of their salvation, and then follow God's perfect will in every decision.**

Listeners Respond

- **Dominican Republic:** “This is a gem for those who like analysis of any kind and for edification in matters of faith.”

Will COVID Ever End?

Here's another way we're trying to keep more Japanese alive:

“Being confined indoors again today is boring and frustrating. So let's imagine it's tomorrow! We can project our minds weeks or months ahead, to a more enjoyable **future**.

“Maybe before the pandemic, you were planning a trip. While you wait, looking at travel destinations and visualizing yourself there, is making you feel better. That ‘tomorrow’ will arrive someday, and you'll be able to pursue the plans you've had to delay.

“While you're waiting, you can develop your plans in more detail, by visiting websites. Those sunny beaches and scenic mountains are going to be great!

“You said your friends are feeling as confined as you are. Then why not phone some of them? You'll feel less isolated, and so will they. Call five people every day – workmates and friends from church.

“Before you phone, select an encouraging verse or two to share from the Bible. For example, ‘The eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.’ Ask them how they are doing and what they would like you to pray for.

“One man had been so frustrated, that he had considered ending his life. That daily call literally kept him alive. So use the time when you're confined, to help someone with a simple thing like a phone call. God will bless you as you bless others.”

Yours for Christian credibility,

Dave and Eleanor Fisher

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